



# MagiCurrents



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### Wauson's Wonderment

**O** K, Wauson's Wonderment may be a stretch but hey, after a few newsletters it gets tougher to find words that start with a G or W. If only I had a name that started with say, R, it might be easier. So what is the wonderment? Well, one of the recent goals of the club has been to venture more outside the walls of Ring 76 to bring magic to more people in San Diego. We've been successful in doing this with a number of public events. Now an opportunity may be coming our way which was beyond any of our club's best efforts: San Diego is now one of the leading contenders for being the host city of the 1998 International Brotherhood of Magicians convention!

Picture a magic convention in which the best and brightest performers come from all over the world. If you would like to attend you would normally schedule vacation time months in advance and make some financial sacrifices. Plane tickets and hotel rooms come to mind. But what if the convention could come to you? You would just be out the registration fee, a few meals out and the time to drive

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## MEETING MINUTES

About 30 members and guests turned out for the December meeting and potluck.. Mary Brown deserves a big THANK YOU for setting up and decorating the room with table cloths and poinsettia plants as center pieces which added a colorful Christmas touch. Thanks also go to everyone who attended; the food was excellent. Ring 76 provided the edible ham; Jeff Marcus and some others were the comedy hams.

Greg Wauson was the stand-in emcee for vice-president

see *DECEMBER* on page 3

## OUR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT

MAGIC IN SINGAPORE  
By Jim Jolly

USS KITTY HAWK - *Somewhere in the Arabian Gulf.*

**A**s I write this it is Thanksgiving Day here. We're 11 hours ahead of San Diego time so you still have a few hours until you begin to smell the turkey and giblets.

One of the nice things about this Navy job, besides the free Thanksgiving meal, is the opportunity to visit many different countries such as the island nation we just left, Singapore. While visiting the "Lion City," I had the pleasure of visiting three magic shops. The first shop I found was more of a novelty store but they had a few inexpensive tricks and a couple

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*WONDERMENT from page 1*

from your home to the convention site (and of course the hundreds of dollars of neat new stuff and lecture notes). And less selfishly, as a member of the host city's local IBM ring, you could play a part in making the convention experience for hundreds of fellow magi from the outer parts of the globe more personal and more enjoyable by volunteering in any of many positions.

Plans are now being made by your Ring 76 board for our entire ring to play host to the IBM board of trustees and the convention site selection committee when they meet here in just two weeks. Specifically, it is our privilege to hold a reception for the anticipated 30 to 40 IBMers and their spouses from all parts of our country on Saturday evening, January 4. Our plans include a 45-minute magic show and plenty of food and drinks. After exploring many different options, your board has decided it will take place at Old Town's Vacation Inn. Many of you will remember that is where Michael Ammar performed his lecture several months ago. The room will be different; we are planning to be in the largest meeting room Vacation Inn offers. We are in contact with Jack Greenberg, who is the chairman of the convention committee. Jack has been very pleasant to deal with and we look forward to working more with him. We are also in touch with a representative of San Diego's convention and visitor bureau who may be able to help us. They want the convention here too!

It should be emphasized that it is not a done deal that San Diego will be the location of the 1998 convention. Other cities are probably just as excited as we are

about attracting the convention to their neighborhood. As I understand, there are still at least two other cities on the west coast which are in the running and they will also be visited by the IBM folks immediately after they leave America's Finest City. And rumor has it that San Diego may have a drawback that there is a large (about 10,000) convention of Panamanians meeting here the same week in 1998 as the planned summer dates for the IBM convention. Whatever happens, we will keep you posted.

Until next time,

*Greg*

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## Magic Day at The Villa

by Gary Dismukes

(Ed. note: A Thanksgiving turkey ran off with this article and was only recently found...)

For the second year running, Ring 76 reached out to the community of San Diego with a special magic "open house" at the historic Villa Montezuma, a restored Victorian house near downtown. This event was co-sponsored by the San Diego Historical Society, which graciously invited Ring 76 back after last year's highly successful "Magic Heritage Day". Built in 1887, the Villa Montezuma is an outstanding example of the late 19th-century "Queen Anne" architecture. The mansion is richly appointed with gorgeous art-nouveau style stained glass, embossed ceilings, gables, turrets, and an onion-domed

tower, serving as an elegant reminder of a by-gone era and an excellent venue for our Ring's magical performances.

Also known as the Jesse Shepard House, the Villa is the unique artistic creation of the celebrated author, musician, and spiritualist Jesse Shepard. Mr. Shepard was well known in the community for his soirees and seances, for which the house was ideally suited. In fact, as part of the pre-show publicity for this event, a special limited-attendance seance was held in the house on the Thursday evening preceding the Magic Day, with last year's Ring 76 president Rick Bruce as the presiding medium. Rick invoked the spirits of days past to recreate some spooky manifestations and recall the ambiance of what it might have been like to attend one of the renowned Mr. Shepard's private seances. The audience and participants were not to be disappointed, as spirits scribbled on blank slates, musical instruments played ghostly tunes and poltergeists had their way.

The "Magic Day at the Villa" was held on Sunday October 27th and featured some of the best in San Diego's local magical talent, with services donated by a range of local performers covering the gamut from close-up to stage, with an eclectic dose of clowning and wild west magic to boot. This event was open and free to the public, with donations requested to benefit both the local Ring and the Villa restoration. Visitors were treated to performances both within several rooms of the house and outside in the garden area throughout the day.

Guests were ushered into the house in groups of 20 to first partake of a close-up show and a special showing and

demonstration of antique magical apparatus belonging to local collector J.P. Jackson. The collection was presented and demo'ed by Ring members Rick Bruce, Gary Dismukes, and Paul Thomey, and featured such memorabilia as the card star, kuma tubes, and an original talking skull. Close-up performances were given in the Drawing Room, presenting the magical talents of Magic Mike (Stilwell), Bill Monroe, Craig Stone, and Ken Dear.

Visitors to the Music Room were treated to parlor magic by Rick Bruce (master of many roles), illusionist Michael Veinbergs, the classic magic and mind reading of Kalamar, the versatile Craig Stone, and Jeff Marcus who finished his stand-up performance with a linking ring routine climaxed by a wristwatch steal from the unsuspecting assistant from the audience. Sherry Luft and Rich Robertson did a fine job of cracking the whip as stage managers inside the house. Greg Wauson performed that duty outside.

The garden area featured several close-up performers including 'Doc' Blalock, Bill Monroe, Ken Dear, and Rob Wasson, children's magic by Ring 76 president Greg Wauson, the wild west comedy magic of Bafflin' Bill Cody (Loch David Crane), and clowning and face-painting by Snickerdoodle (Diane Lane).

Another outdoor feature was the availability of Polaroid spirit photos, with snapshots revealing either of two spirit manifestations (Jesse Shepard or Houdini), made possible by the electronic cleverness of Tom Kasner, attired in wizard's garb and providing additional close-up entertainment. Refreshments provided by Brenda Wauson and

Marcia Bruce were also available to Magic Day visitors. Other Ring members and spouses including Sue Brunkow and Karen Kasner participated as well, serving as greeters and assisting with refreshments.

The Magic Day was a successful showcase of San Diego's magical talent and an excellent promotion for our Ring and magic generally. The venue, the performers and displays of posters of legendary magicians combined to make this day one not to be missed by anyone in the city with any interest in magic.

## **\*\* KID MAGICIANS \*\***

Mary Brown is doing her part to encourage young San Diego magicians by leading a students' magic club every other Thursday afternoon. She welcomes help from Ring 76 members to either teach or perform for these enthusiasts. Mary can be reached at (619) 560-5099. Loch David Crane deserves an attaboy for his recent teach-in there and showing a video of one of his illusion shows. Also, call Rick Bruce at (619) 299-1875 for more information about a new magic club for San Diego youth.

*DECEMBER from page 1*

Sherry Luft who was unable to attend; she was taking care of her seriously ill father back east. (Please remember Sherry and her dad in your thoughts and prayers.) Member-at-large Don Soul shared about the efforts being made to find a location to host the front committee for the international IBM board who will be in San Diego from January 3-5. We want to provide a nice mixer event and some magical entertainment for this group of 30-40 folks who will be scoping out our city as one of a few potential sites for the 1998 international convention.

Greg mentioned the David Ginn and Samuel Patrick Smith comedy clinic for kids' magicians which will be in San Diego in January and provided a stack of flyers. He also mentioned Brad Burt's new December newsletter and left several of them. The goal was to keep the business meeting very, very short so... onto the performers!

Jim Riley, the self-proclaimed world's only 5'18" magician, was first, providing an entertaining routine with a group of coathangers which linked to each other. His handling sure looked fair; with not a key coathanger in sight. Even a hacksaw got into the act.

Next up was Mary Brown. As a sixth grade math teacher, she appropriately chose a math effect with dice and cards. Dealing two cards to some volunteers, she demonstrated addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Where'd you get that 16 of hearts, Mary?

Frank Herman next showed us several effects with jumping and multiplying whistles, a magic vase with a genii who we never saw but who grabbed onto rope,



roses, magic wands and wouldn't let go. He also showed corks which got skinny enough to pass through each other in his bare hands.

Bill Monroe, one of our resident cards-and-coin men, performed a very clean selected card trick. Making it plain that a card was chosen without a force and then put back into the deck in a very fair manner, Bill allowed the deck to then be shuffled and somehow managed to effortlessly come up with the card. Nice effect, Bill.

Bob Prior shared a very entertaining presentation of his \$1.99 snake basket (does that price include the deck of cards?) which contained a whole nest of various snakes (cotton mouth, rattler, garter snake). The final snake must be well educated since it was able to chomp down on just one card, the chosen one. This was a fun routine which would fit well into a show for kids or adults.

Our last magician was Greg Wauson who demonstrated a ring on rope routine in which both items were examined but the rope was still able to penetrate the ring (or was it the ring which went through the rope?). And it must be magic rope since it was cut with just a pair of fingers.

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### INTERNATIONAL *from page 1*

magic kits for kids. I met the owner, Mr. Tan who performs as "Gician" for parties and corporate functions. He had a very nice flyer advertising his dove work, stage shows and parlor magic.

My next stop was the Alakazam Magic & Novelty Centre (no connection to Jeff Marcus) where I met Mr. Charles

Choo. It was a pretty well-stocked magic shop designed for the more serious magician. Mr. Choo was cautious about the kinds of tricks he showed me until he was sure I was a magician. He did a great Hopping Halves effect for me and I ended up buying Nick Trost's Quadraplex which is a self-working card trick based on a mathematical principle first shown by Shigeo Takagi of Japan, who included it in one of his videos.

Quadraplex features two prediction cards. The first winds up indicating the number of cards in a packet of cards; the second is a real surprise used in a "four-piece card with a mismatched corner" part of the trick. This trick wouldn't be a favorite for magicians but it has brought very



nicely reactions from the laymen I perform for aboard ship. Since it works itself (although I throw in some false shuffles and cuts) I can concentrate totally on presentation, which is certainly necessary to sell this trick because it can drag out if you just deal the cards and go through the motions. I tell them I just got this trick in Singapore and I'm still learning it. That helps

sell the 'sucker' bit concerning the mismatched corner. The real acting comes with the feigned look of puzzlement and disappointment on my face when it looks like I must have done something wrong. Quadraplex is a good trick to use for magicians who want to practice their drama skills and for beginners in magic.

**I did a series of card tricks for some Kitty Hawk sailors at an open-air market during a dinner stop...**

My last stop was at the Ang House of Magic, owned and operated by Richard Ang, who also performs in Singapore. Although his shop was well-stocked with a number of new and used magic items I was disappointed to find a few obvious knock-offs to well known commercial items. I saw a packet trick that was called "The \$14 Trick" that was a cheap version of the classic "Color Monte," and others like that. I bought some sponge balls and a couple of booklets about thread work that appeared to be original versions. There were a couple of local magicians visiting when I was there and they were planning on next week's IBM Ring meeting.

I didn't see magic featured anywhere in the 4 days I was there and I had to settle to doing a few card tricks for people I met at restaurants and practicing card manipulations looking at glass reflections while waiting for various subway rides. I did a series of card tricks for some KITTY HAWK sailors at an open-air market during a dinner stop one evening. When I finished, there was a surprising amount of applause as a rather large crowd had gathered. I

finished up with a card on the forehead trick that was well received and retreated to my

dinner of Cajun shrimp.

Now I find myself in the Arabian Gulf, a bit busier than usual. I anticipate visiting Bahrain, Muscat and possibly some of the United Arab Emirates. I'll be sure to pass along any magic stories from the Arabic lands of Aladdin.

## Scott's Thoughts

by Scott Wells,  
A.I.M.C.



### Free For All

"Can you perform for our group this year? It's a charitable club and we are looking for people who will donate their services. Although there won't be any money in it for you, there will be a lot of people there so you'll get lots of exposure." How often have we heard those words? We can almost finish their sentence before they do. How do you deal with these requests for free shows? Well, I've got a few suggestions.

First of all, you should decide how important it is for you to work for free or for a fee. Some magicians only work for a fee while I know some who never accept fees and work for a variety of charitable groups. Some enjoy giving their time and performance as a service to those less fortunate, such as those in hospitals. But there are a plethora of other groups looking for cheap (read "free") entertainment such as churches, Scouting organizations, civic clubs, and schools among a host of others. So, you should first know what you want to get out of it (money, notoriety, and/or personal fulfillment) and what type of venues you prefer. Many of us consciously decide to annually donate a certain number of shows to some specific group(s) that may be pet concerns or projects.

Remember that if you are donating your performance, you may be taking money away from

someone who could have received a fee. It's easier for an amateur or a part-time professional to accept a lesser paying or free show since they have a primary source of income other than magic. Accordingly, before you agree to perform for free, keep in mind that there are others out there who want and need the paying show.

It could be that you want to break in new material. There may be no better place to do that than a free show where you are not worried about being re-booked for the same free engagement should things not work out as rehearsed; however, you should be cognizant of those in the audience whom you may want to impress and who may book you for a better paying date.

Next we need to examine the "charitable-ness" of the organization. That is to say that, although the group may have the best of intentions and the proceeds may go to the good of their beneficiary, they still have expenses. They still have to pay for the banquet room, the food, the drinks, etc. It's doubtful that they negotiated for something less than full rate, though it's possible. So if they request that you to donate your time, then you might ask if they received anything else gratis. If not, then say that you could work for the same discount that they received on the facilities. If they didn't receive any discount, then why should you be supplying your services for anything less than your full fee?

Prudent people shop around for the best deals but they don't always settle for the cheapest. They want the best quality for their money because their personal reputation is also at stake

as organizer. They know what to expect from certain establishments, refreshments, and food but they don't know what to expect from entertainers who vary more than snowflake patterns. Without the organizer having someone specifically in mind whom they want to book, all of us are alike so they may as well throw a dart at the phone book. If we don't want to work for their reduced fee, then they go to the next magician in the phone book and ask the same question. Eventually they will find someone who will work for their budget.

***If the hosting organization pays full fare for the hall, food, and drink, then why shouldn't you receive your full fee?***

But back to the issue of free shows.

If the organizer won't open his purse string for entertainment and continues to say that there will be people in attendance who could book you for shows, then remember that "free shows beget free shows." You could get so much exposure that you get burned, and I don't mean sunburn. You should make certain that when the organizer is asked about your fee, they should either quote your normal fee or refer all questions regarding fees to you. On the other hand, you could make certain that you are exposed to the right people as follows:

If you choose to accept the date, then ask the organizer to send a letter of recommendation to at least six people who may or may not be in attendance. The recipients should be those directly responsible for booking parties, trade shows and/or entertainment (whatever your specialty) for their respective companies. Some time prior to the party, it would not be out of line to ask the names, titles, and companies of

the parties whom they intend to write. To be certain that the organizer follows up on your request, ask that you be "blind copied" with the letters. If the letters haven't gone out within two weeks after the engagement, then you should contact the organizer again as a follow-up to make certain that everything was okay with your show, if they felt that the party was successful, and that they remember to send out the letters this week.

If the organizer doesn't intend to pay you for your services, then there are other ways to capture tangible value. As a minor means of reimbursement, you could ask that you receive a meal for your service. This does not necessarily mean a meal for that evening. If the engagement (I detest the word "gig") is at a hotel or resort, then ask that you receive a complimentary room for two, dinner, and golf to be used at a later date. Just as you should first ask for your full fee, you may as well first ask for as much as you can since they may in turn make the same request of the hosting establishment. Even if you don't play golf or otherwise plan to use them, you could send the certificates as holiday gifts to your better paying clients.

Many charitable groups hold silent and live auctions. These groups solicit donations from a variety of services and establishments as part of their auctions. You may be able to barter your services in exchange for other goods and services (i.e. oil changes, free dry cleaning, meals at other restaurants, artwork, etc.) The value of what you bargain for may be worth more than your full fee.

Another way to ensure that the right people attend your "free" show would be to invite them

yourself. If you agree to donate your show, then ask the organizer to "comp" you tickets for a certain number of your invited guests. I am frequently asked where I will be making public performances. Since most of my engagements are private, these donated performances could be ideal venues to showcase my talents to potential bookers. Furthermore, they not only get to see my performance but also get to enjoy the evening's other festivities (i.e. food, drink, dancing, etc.) compliments of me.

Terry Seabrooke once shared with me an idea when he accepts shows for lesser fees. He requests that a donation be made in his name to the charity for his full fee, or the balance thereof if he has accepted a reduced fee. At the end of the year, he gets a residual effect by getting his name on the roster as a benefactor. Others see his name and think "what a great guy, he's a magician and a humanitarian. I think that I'll book him next year."

Even though you may not find it lying around on the surface, there is still "gold in them thar hills". You just need the right tools to mine for it. Now at least you have a pick, shovel, and a pan.

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## Jargon Watch

(Part II)

*(Ed. note: This is a continuation of an article from Jon Racherbaumer containing descriptions of terms commonly used in magic.)*

**Fan-Of-Two-Cards** - n. Senator Crandall's droll term for a Double Lift.

**Fast and Loose** -- n. This term refers to cardmen who can competently work in different styles, easily move in and out of different circles (of cardmen), and performs a wide variety of sleights and effects. Edward Marlo used the term to describe certain cardmen. The original meaning of the term referred to a medieval street fair swindle or game called "prick the garter." Its root does not mean "rapid and easy," but "bound and unbound." The swindler doubled a leather thong and made a circle of it on the table in which holes were drilled. The sucker, placing pegs in holes, bet that the pegs would be (encircled by the thong) or loose (not inside the loop) when the thong was drawn tight. Magicians know this swindle as the "Endless Chain."

**Fast Company** - n. Very knowledgeable, experienced magicians or gamblers whose expertise, cunning, and perceptiveness are difficult to defeat. They are rarely fooled and their confidence, composure, and impenetrability are unnerving to average magicians. Cheats seldom work if Fast Company is present.

**Flash** -- v. To unintentionally, accidentally, or sloppily expose something that is not meant to be seen. It's related to "leak" insofar as the object is visible to the spectator. However, it generally applies to moving objects and happens during the coordinated orchestration of hands and props during an effect or routine. When sleights or tricks are shown to other magicians, a frequently asked question is, "Did I flash?"

**Flash-and-Filigree** - n. Refers to an ostentatious, showy performing style marked by fast, delicate, and highly skilled movements. Members of this school love flourishes and manipulative embellishments. They tend to flaunt their skill with



stony demeanors or faint smirks. They hold a deck as though it were about to bloom.

**Fried** -- n. A hyperbolic form of Beat. "That trick really fried me!"

**Gets By** - v. This is a weaker version of "plays." There are certain tricks that faintly play or just make the grade in terms of deceptiveness, memorability, and theatrical impact. It's pejoratively used when describing mediocre sleights or middling modi operandi. Creators of these kinds of effects and moves often say, "Hey! I've performed this hundreds of times and it always gets by!" It's a rationalization for mediocrity.

**Glim** -- n. A small, reflecting surface, usually a mirror, that's strategically placed to identify face-down cards. Magicians know them by their sucker term, shiner. Cheaters also call them glimmers, flash, or light.

**Glom** - v. To steal, cop, or palm a card from the deck as in, "Just glom it out!"

**Go South** -- v. Refers to secretly getting rid of an object temporarily hidden, usually in the palm. If seated while performing, the palmed object is dropped and falls southward into the magician's lap. It can also be propelled, kicked, flicked, and thrown backwards to the back edge of the table. Gravity then takes over and the object "goes south" of its own accord. If the magician is standing, the object can "go south" into a topit, even though it really "goes southeast or southwest." The term is frequently used when alluding to an unobservant or unusually unfocused spectator: "I could have gone south with an elephant!"

**Grabber** - n. A spectator who cannot suppress the desire to touch, grab, or closely examine

magic props within his reach. They are uninhibited in speech and action and are brazen intruders. Since they interpret

magic as puzzles to be solved and magicians as charlatans to be exposed, they challenge and attack. If they think you're palming or hiding something, they will forcibly seize your hand or rip away your sleeve.

**Hand-glim** -- n. A glim that is held in your hand. This is the best type for most purposes; however, it takes a great deal of practice to master "playing the light." One of the most celebrated exponents was Eddie "State Street" Fay.

**Hook-up** - n. A slight, barely perceptible misstep or snag in the performance of a sleight. The magician always feels it, though it often whizzes past lay people. You may heard experts mutter things like, "I keep hooking up on the dice switch."

- Jon Racherbaumer  
(Joncards@aol.com)

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An Iranian magician, active in IBM ring 53176R, is compiling information about all magicians worldwide into a research book. Here's your chance to have 15 minutes of fame! His letter indicates a sincere desire to hear from you. Send your biography, flyer, business card and any other correspondence to:

Majid Habibi Faranous  
P.O. Box 14155-4849  
Tehran, Iran



I.B.M. Ring 76

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*MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS should be sent to the club treasurer, Bill Monroe. All Ring 76 members must be members in good standing with the International Brotherhood of Magicians.*

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details.

## How To Be Loved

Throughout the ages, people have yearned for the answer to the following question: What does it really take to be loved by another person? Many have searched their entire lives not finding the scratch for this most basic of itches.

You are probably wondering if this subject is really pertinent to a magic club newsletter. Indeed it is, as you will now see as the secret to this mystery is revealed. Here it comes... Brace yourself... The solution is: Simply become the next editor of our colossal newsletter! Yes, I guarantee you will be loved (or at least strongly appreciated) by the president of Ring 76 and probably also by our multitudes of readers.

Jim Fry has been our editor since June 1995 and has done a 1st-class job. But not wanting to be selfish with all the fun, completed his term with last month's newsletter and has graciously opened up the position for YOU! This month's edition was put together by your club president and if he can do it you can also! Free training!

## What's Coming Up?

**Saturday, January 4:** Reception for IBM top brass at Old Town's Vacation Inn. Includes a magic show! (8:00 PM)

Suggested dress: Cocktail attire (coats and ties for men)

Guests of members are welcome!

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**Monday, January 13:** Ring 76 monthly meeting

Pre-meeting theme: Preparation for February meeting's "out-of-character" night (6:30 PM)

General meeting theme: MAGIC BY THE BOOK. Perform your favorite magical effect learned from a book or video (7:30 PM)

Location: Francis Parker School,  
6501 Linda Vista Rd., San Diego

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**Tuesday, January 21:** Ring 76 board meeting at Tom Kasner's (7:00 PM)

## MEET OUR IBM LEADERS!

**Magic show included!  
Saturday, January 4  
8:00 PM**

**Vacation Inn Old Town  
3900 Old Town Ave.  
San Diego  
(619)299-7400**

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**Ring 76 January Meeting  
Francis Parker School  
6501 Linda Vista Rd.  
San Diego**

**Pre-meeting: 6:30 PM  
General meeting: 7:30 PM**

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